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PRESS RELEASE

US supports initiative to match graduates with employers

First workshop on forming association of universities and employers held at SEEU

Matching university graduates with professional employment opportunities that require a baccalaureate or higher degree is the goal of a new initiative supported by South East European University (SEEU). This initiative is being undertaken with the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), part of the U.S. Mission to Macedonia.

A preliminary seminar held last week at SEEU ended with a general agreement to form an association of universities and employers in Macedonia, to be called **PACE** (Professional Association of Colleges and Employers).

"The aim of this seminar was to discuss the establishment of an association of national and regional scope that will be charged with developing avenues for communication and education about employment opportunities, and with facilitating the matching of university graduates with professional employment opportunities that require a baccalaureate or higher degree," said Patricia Rader, USAID Mission Director.

Possible activities of the new organization could include development of a website, publication of professional journals and newsletters, a joint career fair to be held in Skopje, and regular meetings between potential employers and students at cooperating universities.

Professor C. Randall Powell of Indiana University in the United States facilitated the preliminary seminar. Professor Powell has more than 40 years' experience in the field of Career Development and Planning and several years of collaborative experience with a similar association in the U. S.

Representatives from higher education institutions in Macedonia, regional universities, and over 25 Macedonian and international companies attended the seminar.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested more than \$450 million in Macedonia since 1993. More than 25 projects worth \$25 million a year are currently being implemented. These projects are designed to support Macedonia's transition to a free market-based, multi-ethnic democracy. They include initiatives to accelerate economic growth, develop democratic institutions, and educate citizens for a modern economy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>

USAID's current assistance to SEEU is implemented by the Indiana University Higher Education Linkage Program.